



Dead or Asleep?

GRACE

We need God's love.

Power Text

"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God" (Job 19:25, 26).

Key Text and References

John 11:1-16; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 525-527; student story on page 64 of this guide.

Objectives

The students will:

Know that when Jesus is their friend they need not fear suffering and death.

Feel hope and assurance that God will work things out for them.

Respond by asking Jesus for peace and comfort.

Power Point



Jesus gives me peace when I face suffering and death.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Lazarus, a close friend of Jesus', becomes sick and is about to die, but Jesus makes no effort to go save him. Two days later Jesus says that Lazarus is asleep, and sets out for Bethany. He feels the pain of Martha and Mary and encourages them to trust Him. His grace keeps the believing sisters from blaming Jesus. The unbelieving Pharisees, on the other hand, use the death of Lazarus as a sign that Jesus is not really the Messiah.

This is a lesson about grace.

Jesus seems at first not to respond to human suffering and death. But He turns out to care very deeply and to see the bigger picture, which includes the ultimate gift of grace—eternal life and lasting happiness. Meanwhile, grace enables Mary and Martha to cope with their grief.

Teacher Enrichment

"Lazarus was stricken with sudden ill-

Program Notes			
Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door Hear pleased/troubled	
1 Readiness	10-15	A. <i>Scary Things</i> B. <i>Pilgram's Journey</i> C. <i>Whose Fault?</i>	Paper, pencils, board and marker Large appliance box, bedsheets, six blindfolds, decorated "treasure chest" box, gold candy OR gold paper
* Prayer and Praise*	15-20	See page 60. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	
		Experiencing the Story	Photocopy of John 11:1-16, two silk scarves (optional), red cloth or scarf
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	Scenario	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	Thinking of You	Paper, envelopes, art supplies

ness, and his sisters sent to the Saviour, saying, 'Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.' They saw the violence of the disease that had seized their brother, but they knew that Christ had shown Himself able to heal all manner of diseases. They believed that He would sympathize with them in their distress; therefore they made no urgent demand for His immediate presence, but sent only the confiding message" (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 525, 526).

"When Lazarus died, they were bitterly disappointed; but they felt the sustaining grace of Christ, and this kept them from reflecting any blame on the Saviour" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 526).

"For their sake He permitted Lazarus

to die. Had He restored him from illness to health, the miracle that is the most positive evidence of His divine character would not have been performed" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 528).

"To all who are reaching out to feel the guiding hand of God, the moment of greatest discouragement is the time when divine help is nearest. They will look back with thankfulness upon the darkest part of their way. 'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly' (2 Peter 2:9)" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 528).

What suffering are you experiencing today? What gives you the most comfort? What part does fear play in your life? How do you reach out to feel the guiding hand of God?

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their table/small group leader. Have leader ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Then debrief student(s) on their Bible study activities last week. Say: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** (The leader should know what the students' activities were for the past week so he/she can direct discussion.)

Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A. Scary Things

You Need:

- paper
- pencils
- board
- marker

Divide the class into groups of three to four. Ask each group to make a list of the most frightening things people face in this world today. Give them five minutes to create the list and then merge each group's list onto a board or flipchart. Ask the class to help you assign a number value from one to ten for each fear, one being the least scary and ten being the most scary.

Debriefing

Ask: **What makes these things scary for us? How does it help to know that Jesus is always with us? Today we are learning:**



Jesus gives me peace when I face suffering and death.

B. Pilgrim's Journey

You Need:

- large appliance box
- bedsheets
- six blindfolds
- decorated "treasure chest" box
- gold candy OR gold paper

You need a large appliance box or some bedsheets, six blindfolds, and a box decorated as a treasure chest, some gold-colored candy for the treasure box. (Option: instead of candy, write the power text on gold paper and roll each separately.) Ahead, put the "treasure" in the box.

When it is time to start, choose a group of up to six students (small church: two students) to go inside the house and wait their turn to go find the golden treasure. Say: **To help you in your journey, (name of student) will be the first pilgrim. (Name of adult) will lead the pilgrim blindfolded to the treasure. Then the pilgrim will return and tell you exactly where to go so you can find the golden treasure on your own. Only we are going to time you. You have just three minutes.**

As soon as all six people are blindfolded and in the house, encourage the rest of the class to arrange themselves and the chairs to form a maze between the house and the treasure, blocking the view of where they are going. (Small church: bring cardboard sides of large appliance boxes to aid with the maze. Or hang bedsheets over chairs. Teens might help set this up ahead.) The maze

should not lead the way to the treasure, but away from it. People involved with the maze can offer misleading suggestions or coax pilgrims to walk toward them.

The first pilgrim returns and the timing begins as they try to tell the way. The others may ask questions or start as they please. They may continue to ask as they are into their journey, so long as the first pilgrim still wears their own blindfold. When time is up, remove masks and show the treasure.

Debriefing

Ask: **Who found the treasure?** (It's OK if nobody found it.) Show where the treasure was hid. **Why didn't everyone find it immediately?** (They couldn't see where it was; the directions were not good.) Say: **You and I are on a treasure hunt called life. With a partner, decide what is the treasure you want to find at the end of your life.** After a couple minutes, have students report. (wealth, fame, family, accomplishment, etc.) **When people actually get to the end of their life, do you know what they want most? To live longer. They want life. That's why death is so scary—because it's the end of life. Job was a man facing pain and death. He had also found grace; let's see what he says about death.** Read Job 19:25, 26. **How do you think Job is feeling? Why?** (Because his Redeemer lives. He finds hope in God. He will someday see God.) **Grace teaches us a wonderful lesson this week; I want you to remember it.**



Jesus gives me peace when I face suffering and death.

C. Whose Fault?

Send three people out of the room. While they are out, challenge the class to think up an accusing question to ask the three when they return, one at a time. For instance, **Why were you late this morning?** Or **Why didn't you read your Bible for at least 20 minutes this morning?** Choose a scorekeeper and some lawyers. Their work is as follows:

Scorekeeper: Keeps score for each of the three contestants, as follows:

1 point for every answer that shows that the person takes full responsibility.

0 points for every answer that blames someone else.

Lawyers: They take each answer and ask another "why" question about it. For instance, if a person says she is late because her parents slept in, the lawyer asks: Why did your parents sleep in? Or why didn't you get up anyway? The object is to keep asking why questions trying to see how far back you can get the person to go in finding reasons, excuses, or blame.

Rules: Three 0 scores in a row and the contestant is out. The contestants are not told ahead that these are the rules. The same questions may be asked of different contestants but no question should be asked twice of the same contestant. If this happens, someone in the audience can replace the lawyer who asked it twice.

Debriefing

Ask: **How easy is it to blame someone else?** (very easy) **How is this**

(continued on pg. 61)

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs (for People With Questions)

"Redeemed!" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 338)

"Face to Face" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 206)

"Rejoice in the Lord Always" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 155)

"Open Our Eyes" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 149)

"For God So Loved Us" (*Praise Time*, No. 24)

Prayer

Say: **Let's pray Job 19:25, 26 together. Find a partner and kneel together. I will lead the prayer.** Kneel and then lead the prayer as follows.

Read the text: **"I know that my Redeemer lives."**

Say: **Our Redeemer died so we can live forever. With your partner, pray a sentence or two each thanking God for Jesus.**

Read the text: **"In the end he will stand upon the earth."**

Say: **Praise God that He will be there for us at the end of our lives.**

Read the text: **"After my skin has been destroyed."**

Say: **Admit that you have done wrong; ask Jesus to cover your sin with His goodness.**

Read the text: **"Yet in my flesh I will see God."**

Say: **Accept the promise; tell God how you feel about seeing Him with your own eyes, face to face.**

Conclude the prayer by singing "Face to Face" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 206).

Mission

Say: **The mission story for today reminds us that grace is spreading the love of God throughout the world.** Tell the story in your own words, condensing its length. Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* or another mission report available to you.

Offering

Take up the offering in an envelope or basket decorated with a cross or a picture of Jesus. Say: **Knowing Jesus helps us fight fear when we face death and suffering. When you bring your offerings, it helps to spread the good news of Jesus and to equip others with that peace as well.**

You Need:

- envelope
OR basket
decorated
with a cross
or a picture
of Jesus

* Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

like real life? (When something happens, or doesn't happen when it should, we want to know why. It is often our first question.) **When we keep on asking "why," do we end up looking more responsible for the problem or less responsible?** (Accept their responses.) **Does asking "why" change anything?** (Not usually, though we may have hoped it would.) **If you could ask one "why" question of God, what would it be?** (Accept their responses.)

Probably the biggest "why" question we all ask sooner or later has to do with death. Job at the edge of death found grace way more satisfying than questions. Read Job 19:25, 26.



Jesus gives me peace when I face suffering and death.

2

Bible Lesson

Introducing the Bible Story

Say: **As was mentioned last week, we are studying from John 11 again. Today we are focusing on John 11:1-16, the story of Lazarus' death.**

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- photocopy of John 11:1-16
- two silk scarves (optional)
- red cloth OR scarf

Ahead, photocopy John 11:1-16 and underline or highlight the parts in quotation marks that are to be spoken by the appropriate characters, as indicated in chart below:

Ask for volunteers to read the parts spoken by the following people:

Mary and Martha (with scarves over their heads)

Jesus (with a red scarf or cloth over one shoulder and pinned at the back)

The disciples (the rest of the class)

Thomas

Instruct the characters to listen and act according to the story as it unfolds. Begin reading at verse 1. Do not read

any portion that is between quotation marks, but pause for the appropriate character to read it.

Exploring the Bible

Ask: **Who is the missing character in this story?** Read verse 3. (Accept their responses.) **Ellen**

White tells us that there was a messenger who took the message to Jesus. The messenger was waiting for Jesus to either give him a return message or return Himself. But when Jesus made no move to write or to go, the messenger realized that verse 4 was his answer. Read verse 4.

Say: **When the messenger returned with this word from Jesus, the sisters took heart. Joyfully they told their dying brother the good news. Then they waited. But what happened?** (Lazarus died.) **Now if you had been there, what question might you have asked at this point?** (Why? or Is Jesus really God?) **Because of grace, Mary and Martha**

You Need:

- Bibles

Verse from John 11	Character	Speech beginning . . .
3	Mary and Martha	"Lord, the one you love is sick."
4	Jesus	"This sickness . . ."
7	Jesus	"Let us go . . ."
8	Disciples	"But Rabbi . . ."
9-11	Jesus	"Are there not . . ."
12	Disciples	"Lord, if he sleeps . . ."
14, 15	Jesus	"Lazarus is dead . . ."
16	Thomas	"Let us also go . . ."

did not try to answer the "why" question by blaming Jesus. And they did not doubt Jesus. They just waited for Him.

Say: **But notice what the doubters said.** Read verse 37. **What is the question behind this question?** (Is this man really God?) **This echoes the devil on the roof of the Temple during Jesus' third temptation.** Ask someone to find and read Matthew 4:6. **What made Mary's and Martha's response different from the doubting Pharisees'?** (Mary and Martha

were friends of Jesus; they were believers.) **Ellen White tells us in *The Desire of Ages* that grace kept them from blaming Jesus. Like Job, they knew their Redeemer. And so as we continue this story next week, you will see that through their tears Mary and Martha have hope.** Ask students to find and read Job 13:15 and 19:25, 26 aloud with you.



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3

Applying the Lesson

Scenario

Say: **Imagine you are walking all alone on an unfamiliar street. Suddenly you see five older kids come around the corner and start toward you, shouting angry threats and acting as if they are going to attack you or hurt you.**

Ask: **What are some of the things you might be feeling as you face them alone? How is this like the feelings we have when faced with suffering or death?**

Say: **Now imagine that you begin to loudly call for help and you im-**

mediately see your older brother with ten of his biggest friends round the corner and move in between you and the kids who were threatening you.

Ask: **What are you feeling and thinking now? How have your feelings changed with the appearance of your brother? How is this like having Jesus as our Friend when we face suffering and death in our lives? Remember:**



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4

Sharing the Lesson

Thinking of You**You Need:**

- paper
- envelopes
- art supplies

Working alone or in pairs, ask the students to write a letter to someone in their community or church family who has recently experienced bereavement. (Option: Or write to a church member who is sick, or create sympathy or get-well cards to keep on hand for times they are needed.) In their letter or card, they quote the power text and tell what it means to them.

Debriefing

Have students read out loud what they wrote and show their letters or cards. Sing the power text again and say the power point:



**Jesus gives me peace when
I face suffering and death.**

Creative option: Say Job 19:25, 26 together or sing it in abbreviated form to the tune “All Praise to Thee” (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 53—Tallis’s Canon), as follows:

I know that my Redeemer lives,
And in the end that He will stand.
After my skin has been destroyed,
Yet in my flesh I will see God.

The music can be found on page 140, or you can look in *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* on page 819 for another tune that may be more familiar to your students under the heading L.M. (Long Meter —8.8.8.8.).

Closing

Ask God to send His grace to quiet every fear or anxiety your students will face this week.

STUDENT LESSON

Dead or Asleep?

Key Text

John 11:1-16

Power Text

"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God" (Job 19:25, 26).

Power Point

Jesus gives me peace when I face suffering and death.

Have you ever experienced the death of someone you loved dearly? Did you turn to Jesus for comfort? Even when we can't understand why He is allowing us to go through the pain, we can trust that He has a plan, and we can focus on His power.

Mary and Martha were worried about their brother, Lazarus. His very high fever had seemed to come on overnight. One day he was busy about his usual business, and the next he was lying in a sweat, practically delirious from fever. The only thing to do was to let Jesus know. Jesus, who was like another brother to them. The One who had healed so many people over the past three years. The sisters wrote out their message and sent it by messenger to where Jesus was with His disciples. Then they waited with patient faith.

When Jesus received the message, "Lord, the one you love is sick" (John 11:2, NIV), He responded calmly, "This sickness will not end in death" (verse 4, NIV). The messenger waited for Jesus to say or write something else. But He turned His attention to other things. Obviously the Master was not planning to return to Bethany right now, so the messenger hurried back without Him.

"Where is Jesus?" the sisters asked the messenger upon his return. But the messenger shook his head.

"The Master says, 'This sickness will not end in death,'" he replied.

Mary and Martha were overjoyed at the news. Tenderly they tried to relay the message to their almost unconscious patient. Eagerly they watched for signs of his recovery. Bitterly disappointed, they watched Lazarus die. In their grief they were comforted by grace from Jesus. Not once did they doubt or blame Him.

The disciples, on the other hand,

were puzzled by Jesus. He seemed a little cold to them. They remembered when He hadn't responded to the imprisonment of His cousin John. Why not? Why did He not rush back to Bethany? Why did He go on teaching as if nothing had happened? They knew what a comfort His presence would be to the family He loved so much. His behavior was a mystery to them.

For two more days Jesus went about His business. He didn't once mention Lazarus.

Jesus' enemies, the Pharisees, also had noticed that Jesus had not rescued John the Baptist. To them it was a sure sign that He wasn't who He claimed to be—the Son of God. "If He is the Son of God, if He has so much power," the Pharisees reasoned, "how come He let His cousin die? How come He did not heal His friend?"

For the disciples, it was a troubling two days. Jesus had been talking about trials, losses, and persecution. Would He forsake them during those trying times the way He seemed to have forsaken John and Lazarus?

After two days on the other side of the Jordan Jesus turned back toward Bethany. Even though they wanted Jesus to comfort His friends, the disciples were alarmed. "This is where the Jews tried to stone You," they reminded Jesus. "Are You sure You want to go back to Bethany?" But Jesus was not worried for Himself; the Holy Spirit was leading Him.

"Lazarus is sleeping," He explained.

Now the disciples were more puzzled than ever. If Lazarus was sleeping, that would be a good sign for his recovery. They didn't understand that Jesus was talking not about a natural sleep, but about death.

"Lazarus is dead," Jesus explained further. He added: "I am so glad I did not go sooner, for your sake, so you would believe. Come; let's go."

The disciples turned with Jesus toward Bethany. They didn't understand why Jesus was allowing his friends to face suffering and death, but they trusted that He had everything under control.

Sabbath

- Do this week's activity on page 39.

Sunday

- Read "Dead or Asleep?"
- What new questions might the disciples have had on the way back to Bethany? What have you always wanted to know about death?
- Begin to learn the power text.
- Ask God to help you trust Him.

Monday

- Read John 11:1-16.
- Ask an adult to share the details of a time they faced death or suffering and chose to find comfort in Jesus.
- Ask God to help you remember to ask for His peace when you are frightened.

Tuesday

- Read Job 19:25-27.
- Talk with a grandparent or an older adult. Read today's verses to them. Ask them what the verses mean to them.
- In your Bible study journal, write about your conversation. Or, if you didn't have one, write about your reactions to verse 27. How do you feel about what it says?
- Thank God that He has conquered death.

Wednesday

- Read John 11:11.
- See how many references you can find in the Bible that compare death to sleep.
- If you have trouble, ask an adult to help you.
- Ask God to help you understand the death that is like sleep so you won't be afraid of it.

Thursday

- Sing the power text to the tune you learned in Sabbath School last week, or make up your own tune.
- If possible, watch a young child while they are sleeping.
- Thank God that He has compared death to a sleep. Ask Him to give you peace about the death of loved ones that you have faced, or will face.

Friday

- Share what you have studied this week with your family at worship.
- Recite your power text. Try to learn and recite verse 27 as well.
- Read through the verses of "Face to Face" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 206). Sing it together.
- Talk about how the words to this song go with your power text and this week's lesson.
- Praise God together that He wants to comfort and strengthen you with His grace, face-to-face.